

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-24. (Cancelled).

25. (Currently Amended) A sheath apparatus for use with an endoscope, the sheath apparatus comprising:

a flexible elongated sheath configured to surround an endoscope, the sheath having a flexible lumen extending within the sheath and adapted for positioning adjacent to a surrounded endoscope so as to permit the lumen to move longitudinally in relation to the surrounded endoscope and extend beyond a distal tip of the surrounded endoscope, the lumen having a deflectable distal end and walls defining the contours of the lumen; and

a controller device disposed on the flexible lumen for controlling deflection of the distal end of the lumen, the controller device residing substantially parallel to the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

26. (Cancelled).

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the flexible lumen is substantially parallel to the surrounded endoscope.

28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller device is connected to the distal end of the lumen for controlling deflection of the distal end of the lumen.

29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the flexible lumen is configured to allow the delivery of surgical tools to an operating site.

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said controller device includes a flexible elongated member extending from the proximal end to the distal end of the lumen, the flexible elongated member being eccentrically attached to the walls of the lumen, where retraction of the elongated member in the proximal direction deflects the distal end of the lumen.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller device resides along the walls of the lumen extending beyond the distal end of the endoscope.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein the controller device resides within the walls of the lumen.

33. (Currently Amended) An endoscopic device comprising:
an endoscope;

a flexible elongated sheath for surrounding the endoscope, the sheath having a flexible lumen extending within the sheath and adjacent to the endoscope, the lumen being longitudinally extendable beyond a distal tip of the endoscope and having a deflectable distal end and walls defining the contours of the lumen; and

a controller device disposed on the flexible lumen for controlling deflection of the distal end of the lumen, the controller device residing substantially parallel to the walls extending beyond the distal end of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

34. (Cancelled).

35. (Previously Presented) The endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the flexible lumen is substantially parallel to the surrounded endoscope.

36. (Previously Presented) endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the controller device is connected to the distal end of the lumen for controlling deflection of the distal end of the lumen.

37. (Previously Presented) endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the flexible lumen is configured to allow the delivery of surgical tools to an operating site.

38. (Previously Presented) endoscopic device according to claim 37, wherein said controller device includes a flexible elongated member extending from the proximal

end to the distal end of the lumen, the flexible elongated member being eccentrically attached to the walls of the lumen, where retraction of the elongated member in the proximal direction deflects the distal end of the lumen.

39. (Previously Presented) endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the controller device resides along the walls of the lumen extending beyond the distal end of the endoscope.

40. (Previously Presented) endoscopic device according to claim 39, wherein the controller device resides within the walls of the lumen.

41. (Currently Amended) A method for using an endoscopic device in an endoscopic procedure, the endoscopic device including an endoscope, a flexible elongated sheath surrounding the endoscope, and a flexible lumen having walls defining the contours of the lumen, the flexible lumen extending within the sheath and adjacent to the endoscope for containing a surgical tool, the method comprising the steps of:

inserting the endoscopic device into a body cavity of a patient;
maneuvering the endoscopic device through the body cavity and proximate to an operation site;
longitudinally extending a distal end of the lumen beyond a distal tip of the endoscope; and

deflecting the extended distal end of the lumen to maneuver the surgical tool by manipulating a controller device disposed on the lumen, whereby the controller device resides substantially parallel to the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

42. (Cancelled).

43. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 41, wherein the extending step includes advancing the proximal end of the lumen in the distal direction.

44. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 41, wherein the lumen has a flexible extension eccentrically disposed on the lumen at the distal end and an elongated member extending along the lumen from the proximal end to the distal end, the elongated member being attached to the flexible extension, and wherein the deflecting step includes retracting the elongated member in a proximal direction to deflect the flexible extension.

45. (Currently Amended) A sheath apparatus for use with an endoscope comprising:

a sheath configured to surround an endoscope, the sheath having a tube extending within it and adapted for positioning adjacent to a surrounded endoscope, the tube having walls defining the contours of the tube and the tube being capable of

moving longitudinally in relation to the surrounded endoscope and extending beyond a distal tip of the surrounded endoscope; and

a controller disposed on the tube for deflecting the distal end of the tube, the controller residing substantially parallel to the walls of the distal end of the tube extending beyond the distal tip of the surrounded endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

46. (Cancelled).

47. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the tube is substantially parallel to the surrounded endoscope.

48. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the tube is configured to allow the delivery of surgical tools to an operating site.

49. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the controller includes a flexible member extending from the proximal end to the distal end of the tube, the flexible member being eccentrically attached to the tube, where manipulation of the flexible member at the proximal end deflects the distal end of the tube.

50. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the controller resides along the walls of the tube extending beyond the distal end of the endoscope.

51. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 50, wherein the controller resides between the walls of the tube.

52. (New) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller device is longitudinally movable relative to the flexible elongated sheath and a distal end of the flexible lumen.

53. (New) The endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the controller device is longitudinally movable relative to the flexible elongated sheath and a distal end of the flexible lumen.

54. (New) The method according to claim 41, wherein the controller device is longitudinally movable relative to the flexible elongated sheath and a distal end of the flexible lumen.

55. (New) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the controller is longitudinally movable relative to the sheath and a distal end of the tube.

56. (New) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the controller device is configured to follow the contours of the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

57. (New) The endoscopic device according to claim 33, wherein the controller device is configured to follow the contours of the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

58. (New) The method according to claim 41, wherein the controller follows the contours of the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the flexible lumen is deflected.

59. (New) The apparatus according to claim 45, wherein the controller is configured to follow the contours of the walls extending beyond the distal tip of the endoscope when the distal end of the tube is deflected.